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A

L E T T E R

T O T H E
F R E E - H O L D E R S, &c.

O F
G R E A T - B R I T A I N,
C O N C E R N I N G

Their D U T Y before and after the Election of
their R E P R E S E N T A T I V E S.

W I T H
The C H A R A C T E R S of several S T A T E S M E N and Poli-
tical Writers.

*Avoid the politick, the factious, Fool,
The busy, buzzing, talking, harden'd, Knave,
The quaint smooth Rogue, that sins against his Reason,
Calls saucy, loud, Sedition publick Zeal,
And Mutiny the Dictates of his Spirit.*

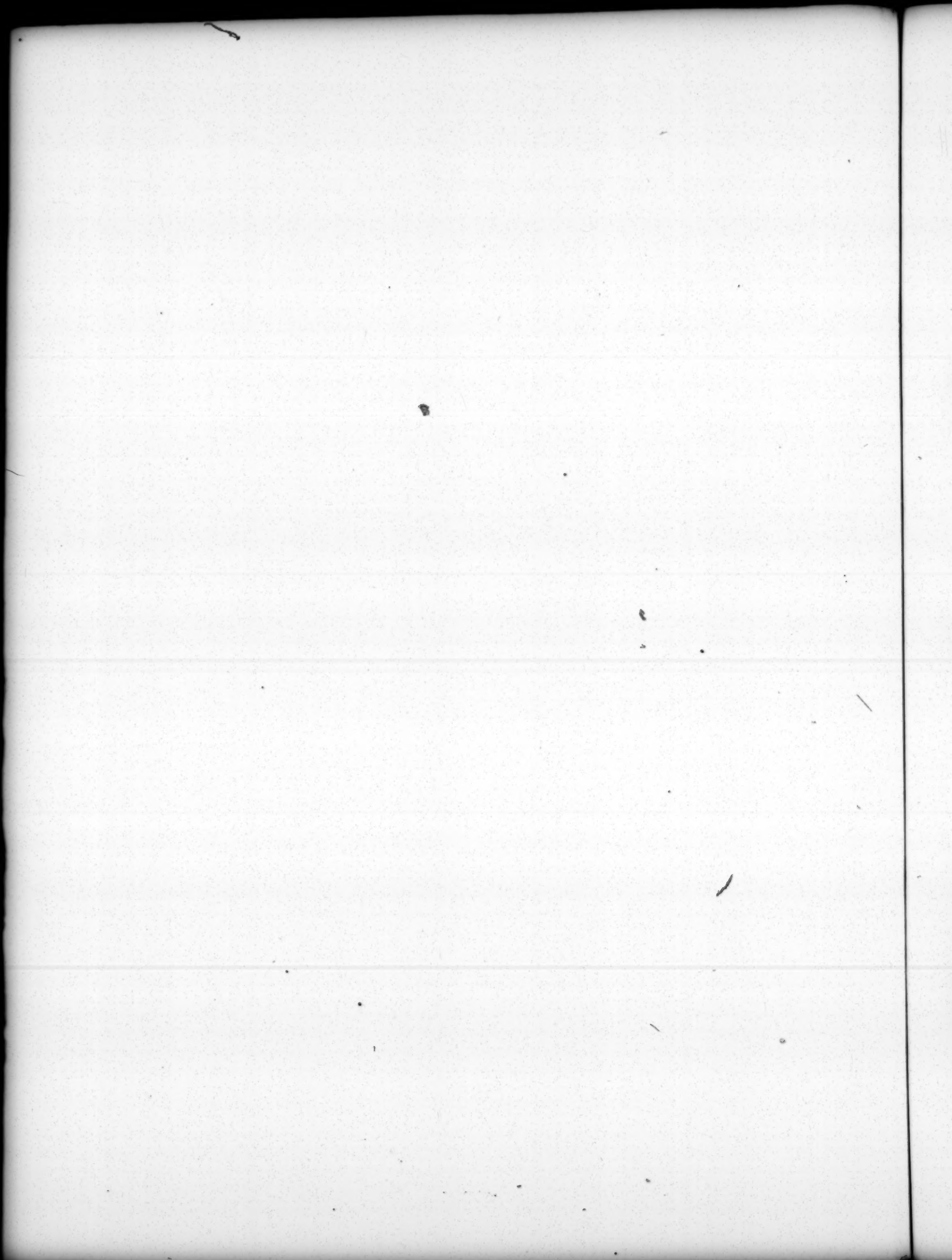
O T W A Y :

L O N D O N :

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A
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F R E E - H O L D E R S, &c.
O F
G R E A T - B R I T A I N,
C O N C E R N I N G
T h e i r D U T Y before and after Elections, &c.

Gentlemen,



T a Time when many evil disposed Persons indulge the most violent Passions, contrary to the Dictates of their Reason in their Intervals of Reflection, and at a Time when those Passions are not only the Springs of their own Actions but of those of other People, and when those Actions break

in upon the publick Tranquility, it is the Duty of every one, that has it in his Power, to use his best Endeavours to stop the hurtful Current by pointing out the Dangers into which the deluded are plunging themselves. I am not loading ye all with Accusations; for I am sensible that not a few of ye have been deceived into Errors by false Representations of Facts, and by such Characters of your stedfast Friends as belong rather to Enemies: yet I think many of ye are not absolutely free from Blame; because a too precipitate Concurrence with the slanderous Reports of malicious and envious Men, levelled against your experienced Friends, betrays a Forgetfulness, or Neglect, of past Favours, and brands ye with some Degree of Ingratitude.

To avoid the Imputation of being ingrateful, and the Inconveniencies of a too hasty Credulity, you should examine into your Duty before and after the Election of your Legislators, and into the Characters of the Persons aspersed, and of those who asperse them; which, after an impartial Examination from Facts, will influence you in your Choice.

I need not here inform ye that the Constitution of Government under which you live is the best in the World; and one Circumstance which renders it the freer from Exception is, your being your own Lawgivers; for those who represent ye being chose by yourselves they are the Voices of those who chose them:

them : for which Reason, before you choose them,
 your Duty is to point out such Persons for your Repre-
 sentatives as you have Room to think, from their past
 Conduct and general good Characters, will never devi-
 ate from that Constitution which is the Support of your
 Liberty and Property. After you have chose them,
 you are to look upon them as Men chose to represent
 yourselves, that whatever they do in their legislative
 Capacities is an Act of your own, and which, while it
 is transacting, should meet with no Interruption from
 you, because if ye presume to interrupt their Proceed-
 ings, you yourselves break through your Constitution,
 and contradict your own Actions ; for while you are
 choosing your Representatives you declare to the Pub-
 lick that you think those Persons possessed of sufficient
 Abilities to be your Legislators, and likewise that they
 are endowed with sufficient Probity to be trusted in
 that important Work. Your Election of them, I say,
 is a Declaration of such an Opinion of their Wisdom
 and Honour : and after they are elected you have no
 more Power to direct their Actions than you have to
 direct the Laws, which are already made, according
 to your own Judgments of them, and not by the plain
 Letter thereof : hence therefore arises your indispensa-
 ble Duty to inform yourselves well of the Characters
 of those whom ye choose ; because when ye have chose
 them

them they are as absolute in their legislative Capacities as yourselves were in your Election of them.

Thus I have briefly pointed out your Duty before and after the Election of your Representatives; which I intend only as the Groundwork of what follows.

Now let us suppose, in any given Point of Time, a Clamour raised against any one Member, or more, of the House of Commons: what is the Duty of those who chose that Member, and likewise of those who have the Right of choosing all the Rest? Their Duty is to examine impartially into the Conduct of him, or those, so aspersed; they are to compare his or their present and past Conduct together, to see if they are consistent or not with the Safety of their Liberty and Property: they are likewise to examine impartially into the Conduct and Characters of the Aspersers; and the Result of such Examinations should determine their Judgments.

Now, Gentlemen, permit me to assure you that this is at present your own Case. In the following Characters I shall use no Names; because if they are not like the Originals I am a bad Draughtsman, and Nobody will regard my Copies; and if my Characters will suit none but the Originals from which they are taken, I shall be liable to no Censure for Partiality and false Colourings, and shall possibly contribute thereby to the opening your Eyes, and to the freeing ye from Errors dangerous to yourselves, and to the Community.

Remem-

Remember, Countrymen, that there is a Person now living, who has been eminent in three Reigns for his inviolable Attachment to the Preservation of your Liberties and Properties. I can not pretend in this Letter to enumerate the many Instances of his publick Spirit which his past Life affords, without exceeding the Bounds prescribed for this Epistle. He exerted himself early in the Cause of Liberty, at a Time when almost all *Europe* was in Arms, and when *Great Britain* made a powerful and gallant Stand against the insolent and bold Attempts of an arbitrary Prince, who seemed to aim at no less a Sovereignty than all *Europe*: at this Time the Person, of whom I am now speaking, was received into the Favour and Friendship of the greatest General that then conducted the War, and into the Favour and Friendship likewise of one of the best and most upright Ministers that ever presided over the Treasury, into this Alliance of Hearts he was received from similar Virtues in him, which were the strongest Recommendations to those great and worthy Men. After the Administration of these Patriots was over, and one of them was forced to retire from his native Land through the treacherous and destructive Wiles of his Enemies, a Set of Men succeeded in the Administration, who will be handed down to Posterity, not as the greatest Friends nor Ornaments to their Country: in this Administration the Root of your Liberties was struck at by tearing from ye the dearest Pledges of
your

your Loves, your Children, by denying you the Privilege of educating them as ye pleased: and to what End was all this? To make Way for a Popish Pretender to the Crown, and to exclude the present Royal Family, who are born and nurtured in Principles of Liberty and Virtue. Remember that one of the principal Persons in that wicked Administration is now living; of whom I shall have occasion to speak more largely hereafter in this Letter: and remember likewise, Countrymen, that the Person who is now the Subject of my Enquiry was vigorous and inflexible in his Opposition to the abominable and pernicious Measures then carrying on. To the Happiness of *Great Britain*, this Administration was but of short Continuance; their Mistress dyed, and with her Life ended their unrighteous Power; which Administration seems as designed by Providence to give us the better Relish of happier Seasons, and to enhance our Veneration for able and just Ministers. Some Time after the much desired Succession of the House of *Hanover* to the Throne, the Person, whose Character I am partly drawing, resigned his publick Trusts, from some Misunderstanding which there is no Necessity now to enquire into; and to his Honour, at that Time, some of the worthiest Men in the Kingdom became voluntary Companions in his Resignation, choosing to be out of Power with him rather than in the highest Stations without him: so powerful is the Force of Wisdom and Integrity

grity in their Influence over good Minds! His Absence from Power was not long; and, from the Time in which he regain'd it, he employ'd it to the publick Benefit. Here, Gentlemen, you can not forget the fatal Year 1720, when the Credit of the Nation stood almost on the Brink of Ruin: by whose Prudence afterwards was the State of the publick Revenues put into the best Order that possibly it could be? The Revenues were from the Year 1721 thrown into the Channel in which they have since been, and conducted by this Person with the best Oeconomy. The *sinking Fund* was his favourite Offspring, and it has been justly and wisely appropriated to pay off the Principal of the national Debt; which will in Time ease you of those Burdens which some Malecontents now complain of; and the Interest has always, since he has been at the Head of the Treasury, been duly paid to the Creditors of the Nation. Many have been his Projects to the Advantage of this Kingdom, which, in their Birth, or soon after, have been foretold by his Enemies to be of evil Consequences, which to the Confusion of his Foes always had different Events. Thus I have given a short, a true, but imperfect, Character of this Minister; who, while he consults the Grandeur, Ease, and Honour, of his royal Master, meditates at the same Time the Glory and Prosperity of the Nation; and to his own Reputation it must be recorded that his inviolable Attachment to his Prince and the royal Family has often

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been

been the Subject of Reproach from his Enemies. I think I have drawn a Picture, though faintly, to which I need subscribe no Name: and all who have leagued with this Person should be looked on by the Eyes of their Countrymen as Colleagues in the highest Acts of Patriotism, and as the fittest Men to be intrusted with a legislative Capacity. To what End, Gentlemen, this Character is given doubtless appears partly already, but it will more fully hereafter; a Character I shall here close in the Words of a great and mature Statesman * of a former Reign.

*Though all the Storms and Tempests should arise
That Church Magicians in their Cells advise,
And from their settled Basis Nations tear,
He would unmoved the mighty Ruin bear,
Secure in Innocence condemn them all,
And, decently array'd in Honour, fall.*

This Enquiry, Gentlemen, it is now your Duty to make, that if you find the Characteristicks true ye may be influenced by them in your Conduct.

Now let us examine into the Characters of those who have been indefatigable in their Defamations of this Person: among which are some Traders, whose Frauds he would have prevented, by cutting off the Channels through which they run. Are such Men to be regarded

* The Earl of Hallifax, in his Poem called *the Man of Honour*.

ed against one who studied the publick Good by the Abridgment of private fraudulent Gains? Should you, Gentlemen, be prejudiced against a Friend, because a few *Tavern-men* were going to be reduced to Honesty, and to be render'd incapable of poysoning you? But this is a Subject that has already been sufficiently handled: I shall therefore proceed to the Characters of those Persons who are vigorous in their Writings, and in patronising such Writings, as are destructive of all Order and social Virtue

I think, I can not begin better than with the History of a weekly Paper called the *Country Journal* or the *Craftsman*. This Paper was first set on Foot under the Title of the *Craftsman* only, and came out oftener than once a Week, and without any News. The Author was a Person who had made a very mean Figure among the Writers of his Time; he had been expelled the University of *Oxford*, but whether the Report of the Cause of his Expulsion is true or not, which I will not venture to affirm and therefore not mention it, certain it is he was expell'd, and we may modestly conclude for no abundant Virtues; soon after his Expulsion he published a silly scandalous Paper on the University, and particularly levelled at the Head of the College from which he was driven, a Paper which was intended for Satire, but, in the Opinion of all Men of Taste, deserved no other Appellation than jejune licentious Ribaldry. To repair the Breach which his Mis-

fortune at College had made, he addressed himself in fundry Shapes to the worthy Statesman whose Character I have just before drawn in Part; he likewise applied himself in Dedications, and Verses, to an excellent Prelate now living, and to other Friends of the aforesaid Statesman, but did not meet with the Reception which he thought due to his Merit. After several Offers of his Service to the great Man, now the Object of his Malice, he strove to make himself popular by Scandal and Abuse since he could not by Panegyrick; he that had before employed his little Talents in the Praises of that great Man, and his Friends, and writing Satires on his Enemies, turned the Tables, and levelled his Abuse at the former Subjects of his Praise, and courted those whom he had before abused. This is the *Thing*, Countrymen, that many of you have long listened to: mark him well, and consider whether such an Animal, whose Actions spring from such Motives, should command your Attention.

The next Person that comes under our Consideration is one who was admitted early to the Favour of the Statesman before mentioned, and who arose by his Friendship to Places of great Honour and Trust, and who was in the Esteem of his Country for being esteemed by him; but not being exalted to the Station which he thought he deserved, he turned against his former Patron (for such I must call him) and became, from the Time in which he broke into open Enmity, violent and inde-

indecent even in the Senate, and a clandestine Slanderer in Pamphlets and weekly Libels; nor has his Prince escaped the Virulence of his Pen. At the Time when the *Craftsman* first came out, the obscure Author was entirely unknown to this Gentleman; but he, like a Prince at a Loss for Auxiliaries, took the scribbling *Swiss* into his Service. This Patron of the *Craftsman* is a Man of Parts, unguided by Judgment, the worst Weapons in the Hands of a Man who admits of no Reins to his Passions: he is avaritious, envious, malicious, and turbulent, like *Moloch*,

* *the fiercest Spirit*
That fought in Heav'n, now fiercer by Despair.

Think, Countrymen, what Regard you ought to pay to such Men as these and their Allies, and how fit they are to be trusted with any Share of the legislative Power.

Now, Gentlemen, call to mind the last four Years of the late Queen; and, when I assure you that the principal Actor in the publick Scenes of Iniquity of those Times is in this Confederacy, judge what can be reasonably hoped from such a mottly Alliance. I need not here rip up old Sores, by talking of the *Schism-bill*, the *Canady Expedition*, and a Multitude more of Circumstances sufficient to render a Man unfit to breathe in these Climes; suffice it that ye may justly call him a
Wretch

* *Paradise lost. Book 2.*

Wretch who has been of each Party and betray'd each.
His Character is compleatly drawn, by *Milton*.

† *BELIAL, in Act more graceful and humane ;
A fairer Person lost not Heav'n ; he seem'd
For Dignity compos'd, and high Exploit ;
But all was false and hollow, though his Tongue
Drop'd Manna, and cou'd make the worse appear
The better Reason, to perplex and dash
Maturest Counsels ; for his Thoughts were low,
To Vice industrious, but to nobler Deeds
Timorous and slothful ; yet he pleas'd the Ear.*

These at present are the most considerable Instigators, Propagators, and Venders, of Sedition: to whom I may add two more ; one has been long a Servant of that profound Politician Mr. *Mist*, and has, for many Years past, been of Errants for him to *Bologn* and other Places ; he is an *Irish Papist* ; and I am informed that his chief Business now is to correct the Press for *Fog's Journal* ; and now and then he is allowed to throw in a little Scandal. The other Person is Mr. *ADDISON'S Cousin*, a Person who was always inclined to think himself more considerable than other People did ; some Years ago he fancied a certain Person of Distinction employ'd Assassins against him, at a Time when that Person scarcely employ'd a Thought about him: and he

has

has since fancied that a certain Minister is in a Plot against him, who has enough to do to transact the Business of the Nation, and to guard against Plots daily carrying on against himself. The first Thing that made this Gentleman known as a Writer was an *Epilogue*, with some humourous bawdy Turns in it, which I have been informed his Cousin *Addison* wrote, and allowed him the Credit thereof to gain him a petty Reputation among the Wits; so the Debts of Acknowledgment which this Gentleman has since paid to the Memory of his Cousin *Addison* are, at the same Time they are Instances of his Vanity, Proofs of his Gratitude: but as I have been assured that this Gentleman now labours, and has long laboured, under an Infirmary that renders him an Object of Compassion to generous Minds, it would be as cruel to take an Advantage over him, in whom is an Absence of the Power of reasoning, as it would for an armed Man to fall on a naked Person: and the only Reason for my bringing him in here is to shew you, Gentlemen, that the present Enemies to the Government, those who profess themselves such in their Writings, and in patronising disloyal Writings, are disappointed Courtiers, arraigned Traytors, hireling Scriblers, *Irisb* Papists, and Madmen.

Now, Countrymen, suppose yourselves at a Trial; examine into the Credit of the Witnesses, enquire into the Characters of the Persons accused, and of the Accusers. Consider whether I have represented the Case right: I have used no Names, but Circumstances, and
if

if they agree with Truth, as I am persuaded they do, you can not be long in determining who are your Friends and who not : and allow me again to tell ye that it is your indispensable Duty to make an impartial Enquiry as I have done ; and, if you do, I know what the Result of the Enquiry will be ; it will end in Favour of those who have been the Subjects of much Abuse, and in the Shame of the Traducers.

This grotesque Assemblage of factious Writers in my Mind brings into my Remembrance the following strong Image drawn by a * masterly Hand.

*Around the Fiend in hideous Order sate
Foul-bawling INFAMY and bold DEBATE,
Gruff DISCONTENT, through Ignorance misled,
And clam'rous FACTION at her Party's Head,
Restless SEDITION, still dissembling Fear,
And sly HYPOCRISY with pious Leer.*

The Enquiry which is here made I thought my Duty to make, nor did I think I had wholly performed my Duty till I had communicated the Fruits of my Enquiry to you ; in which I hope I have approved myself, as I shall always be proud to do, Gentlemen,

Your sincere Friend,

and humble Servant,

August. 1733.

FREE-HOLDER.

* Sir Samuel Garth.

